

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency - Region 9

FACT SHEET
Notice of Proposed Rulemaking

Determination of Attainment of the 1-Hour Ozone Standard
San Francisco Bay Area, California

October 23, 2003

Today's Announcement

- EPA is today announcing it is proposing to make a finding that the San Francisco Bay Area has attained the national 1-hour ozone standard.

Background

- Unlike stratospheric ozone, ground-level ozone (the primary ingredient of smog) is harmful to public health. Exposure, even at relatively low levels, can cause respiratory symptoms such as a reduction in lung function, chest pain, and cough. Repeated exposure can make people more susceptible to respiratory infection and lung inflammation, and can aggravate preexisting respiratory diseases.
- EPA's 1-hour ozone standard defines a violation as an average of more than one exceedance per year over a consecutive 3-year period. An exceedance occurs when a monitor records a value above the 0.12 ppm standard.
- By means of notice-and-comment rulemaking, EPA issues attainment findings when appropriate. These findings are based on a review of the air quality data and a verification that the monitoring network is adequate.
- Based on air quality monitoring data for the current 3 year period, the Bay Area has demonstrated compliance with the 1-hour ozone NAAQS.
- On October 21, 2003, the California Air Resources Board sent a letter requesting that EPA make a finding that the Bay Area has attained the 1-hour ozone standard.

How Many Times has the San Francisco Bay Area Exceeded EPA's 1-Hour Ozone Standard?

- By the end of the smog season this year, the Bay Area had recorded only 1 value above the 1-hour NAAQS. This exceedance occurred at the Livermore monitor, which

typically records peak concentrations within the Bay Area. This monitor recorded no exceedances in 2001 and 2 in 2002, for a total of 3 exceedances over the 3-year period of 2001-2003.

- During the 2001-2003 period, only three of the Bay Area's 24 ozone monitors recorded any exceedance of the 1-hour ozone standard: Livermore (3), Bethel Island (1 in 2001), and Concord (1 in 2001).

What Happens Next in the Bay Area?

- While meeting the 1-hour ozone standard is a notable achievement and illustrates that the Bay Area is making progress in cleaning up the air, there is still work to be done. The State and local air quality agencies must ensure that the Bay Area continues to meet the 1-hour standard and must address the issues of downwind transport of air pollution and attainment of both the state 1-hour ozone standard and the new federal 8-hour ozone standard.
- Given the air quality challenges ahead, the State and local air quality agencies must build on their progress in identifying and reducing sources of air pollution by adopting additional control measures.
- A finding of attainment does not constitute a redesignation to attainment. Before an area can be redesignated to attainment, the State must submit and EPA must approve a maintenance plan showing, among other things, that the area will continue to maintain the standard for a 10-year period.

Further Information

- A copy of the proposed finding of attainment is available in the Air Programs section of EPA Region IX's website, <http://www.epa.gov/region09/air/sfbayoz/>.
- EPA will soon publish its proposed finding of attainment in the Federal Register. A 30-day comment period will commence on the date of publication. Comments may be mailed, faxed, or e-mailed to EPA.
- For more information or to submit comments, contact Ginger Vagenas at (415) 972-3964, or vagenas.ginger@epa.gov. Correspondence sent by US mail should be addressed to:

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